Ansel Brown, assistant professor of Political Science at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), was named the new Director of the University Honors Program (UHP) in the Fall of 2010. An alumnus of NCCU and returning as a professor since 2008, Brown specializes in international law, public policy, and civic leadership.

Prior to entering academia, Brown served as policy counsel at the N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development and the Center for Responsible Lending, where he advocated for consumer protection laws aimed at reducing predatory subprime lending and rising student debt.

“I came through the University Honors Program as a student, and it means a lot to come back and serve a program that served me,” he said. “My goal is to create a highly engaging and dynamic program that prepares leaders for a global society,” said Brown.

Brown earned his bachelor’s degree from NCCU and his Juris Doctorate from Harvard Law School. While a law student, he received the Dean of Students Community Leadership Award and served on the International Law Journal. He is a member of the N.C. State Bar, the N.C. International Affairs Council and Vice-President of the N.C. Political Science Association. Brown is also the founder and chairman of the Jackie Brown and Luddie Strickland Scholarship, which is named for his late father and maternal grandmother and awarded to well-rounded African American students graduating from high school in his family's hometown of Jonesville, NC.
Honors students Aletheia Burrell, Sharae Alford, Adedolapo Busuyi, LaQuesha Cannon, Victoria Jones, Jovia Ochieng, Melony Ochieng, Nzingha Saunders, Ninecia Scott, Angelica Spratley, Naima Stennett, Natalie Sutton, Martinique Thomas, and MaKendra Umstead engaged in the Women Inspiring Learning Momentum (W.I.L.L) program, where they mentored minority middle school females, encouraging them to explore careers in the sciences. The students met on Saturdays with girls from Shepard Middle School at the NCCU BRITE (Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise) Building, where they mentored the girls, providing scientific demonstrations and inspiring seminars. The W.I.L.L mentoring aims to break through barriers facing middle school females, who often lose interest in the sciences during the middle grades due to multiple influences, including societal pressures. The W.I.L.L program will continue in the 2011-2012 school year as the student mentors continue to set the standard for future female scientists.

UHP STUDENT SUCCESS FEATURE: REGGIE MCCRIMMON Elected NCCU SGA President

UHP student Reggie McCrimmon was elected SGA president for the 2011-2012 academic school year. McCrimmon, a Political Science and Public Administration major, is also an active member of the Student African-American Brotherhood, the Centennial Scholars Program, and the Gamma Beta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated. He has been recognized for his leadership as a recipient of the 2010 Eagle Eye Award and the 2010 Emerging Leader Award. In addition, McCrimmon served as freshman class president and director of academic affairs on the SGA Executive Board, delivering keynote addresses and serving as moderator for various campus events. McCrimmon says his chief focus as SGA president is to reconstruct SGA in a fashion that strengthens the connection between NCCU’s administration and the student body. Additionally, McCrimmon plans to connect and serve NCCU and the local community through collaborative efforts during his tenure as SGA President. After completing his undergraduate degree, McCrimmon plans to attend law school with aspirations of becoming a United States Senator.

UHP STUDENT SUCCESS FEATURE: UHP STUDENTS SHINING ON CAMPUS AND BEYOND

In Spring of 2011, honors students took a lead role in organizing and presenting at the university’s inaugural Student Success Symposium held in the Pearson Banquet Hall. The symposium, an initiative of the Chancellor and chaired by Dr. Frances Graham, engaged students in an open and dynamic conversation about student success at NCCU. Beyond NCCU, UHP Students also shined brightly at the National Association of African American Honors Programs (NAAAHP) conference, co-hosted by NCCU at NC A&T State University. Christopher Lopez was voted Mr. NAAAHP and Victoria Jones was the crowd favorite and runner-up in the “Honors Got Talent” contest.
UHP STUDENT SUCCESS FEATURE: CHARLOTTE CRONE RECOGNIZED BY BILL CLINTON ON GOOD MORNING AMERICA

Charlotte Crone, a UHP Pharmaceutical Sciences major, was featured on Good Morning America where she was highlighted for her Healthy Choices project by former President Bill Clinton. Charlotte’s project is a pilot program she initiated at two Durham elementary schools, which aims to combat childhood obesity by providing weekly meal plans, food stamp-compliant grocery lists, and recipes to feed a family of four for $50 a week. Charlotte was featured by the former President as a first runner-up in the Clinton Global Initiative University Challenge. In the competition, Charlotte’s project topped student projects from Stanford University, Oxford University, the University of Texas, and a field of projects from institutions including Dartmouth College, the University of Pennsylvania, and John Hopkins University.

UHP STUDENT SUCCESS FEATURE: MAKENDRA UMSTEAM RECEIVES CHANCELLOR’S AWARD

MaKendra Umstead was awarded the 2011 Chancellor’s Award, the university’s top academic honor for non-transfer students. MaKendra matriculated through NCCU in four years with a perfect 4.0 grade point average and graduated in the Spring of 2011 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences. As a student, MaKendra researched genes involved in chloroplast development in the plant molecular biology laboratory with Dr. Jiahua Xie. She also participated in summer research in the area of neuroscience at Yale University.

Most recently, MaKendra received the 2010 United Negro College Fund – Merck Undergraduate Science Research Scholarship Award, which included two summer internships at Merck Research Laboratories in Boston and a $10,000 departmental grant.

MaKendra will continue in graduate school to obtain a Ph.D. in Cancer Biology at Emory University. She hopes to be instrumental in discovering novel treatments for cancer and to serve as a lead researcher on a Research and Development team in the pharmaceutical industry.

HOT TOPICS AT UHP CAFÉ AND FORUMS

The University Honors Program initiated in 2010-2011 its UHP Café, a monthly café chat with honors students and NCCU faculty members on important issues impacting the world. Sponsored by Starbucks’ Coffee on Highway 55 in Durham, NC, and Barnes and Noble Bookstore at Southpoint Mall, UHP Cafés featured dynamic discussions with university and guest lecturers on a range of issues. Discussions included the controversy surrounding the Ground Zero Islamic Center, the economic recession, 2010 mid-term elections, the Arab Spring and military operations in Libya, the role of hip hop culture in community activism, along with other forums addressing issues such as drug resistant staff infection in minority communities, the African Diaspora in the Americas, and several other forums. The cafés were held in the student lounge of the H. M. Michaux School of Education Building.

Right: Staff and students at UHP Café
UHP GETS TRANSCRIPT DISTINCTION

In the Spring of 2011, the University Honors Program received an important academic distinction that will enhance the competitiveness of UHP students applying to graduate schools and seeking high-level employment opportunities. Notably, all UHP students who complete the University Honors Program requirements will have “University Honors Program” designated on their academic transcript upon graduating from North Carolina Central University. Students admitted to NCCU prior to 2011 who complete 12 Honors credits and 15 Honors service hours will also be eligible for the transcript distinction. Freshmen admitted to NCCU in the Fall of 2011 or after will be required to complete 16 credits of Honors courses in the General Education Curriculum, two Honors seminars, a UHP-recognized Honors elective in their major, and an Honors capstone thesis project in their field of study. Students will be able to substitute up to three regular course credits as “honors” through an Honors Contract with the UHP Director and course professor. Students admitted into the program after 2010 who do not meet the full requirements for the UHP transcript distinction but complete all Honors requirements except the honors thesis project, or post-Freshmen admittees who complete at least six Honors course credits and their capstone thesis, will be recognized as University Honors Scholars notwithstanding that they will not receive the UHP transcript distinction.

RETURNING TO ANNIE DAY SHEPARD HALL

After a seven-year hiatus, the University Honors Program will be returning to Annie Day Shepard Hall in the Fall of 2011 under the Residential Life Living and Learning Community Initiative. Annie Day Shepard Hall has a rich history as the home of the University Honors Program, where for years, honors students have been groomed for leadership in society. The newly reconstituted Shepard Hall UHP Community will have several new features, including a technology-enhanced smart meeting space with web conferencing capabilities, access to the latest computer technology for students to check out in the residence hall, an in-house residential library furnished with inspirational and intellectually-enriching books, and several other amenities to enhance the students’ living and learning experience. Through collaborative efforts, the living and learning community will create an intentionally intellectual and social environment that fosters student success.

Not only will honors students be able to share in the rich experiences provided for them in the Annie Day Shepard UHP Living and Learning Community, but they will have easy access to the University Honors Program Office, which will be located in the ground floor of the residence hall. Through this initiative and others, UHP is making tremendous strides to fulfill its mission and Prepare World Changers!

CONTACT UHP

University Honors Program
G05 Annie Day Shepard Hall
1801 Fayetteville Street
Durham, NC 27707
Phone: 919-530-5379
Fax: 919-530-5378
Email: honors@nccu.edu

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM